its taste; that it would be contributed to by artists of eminence, who only occasionally make ornamental art their study; and that it would be resorted to by our manufacturers as purchasers of models and designs. Thus it would be an immense stimulus to emulation and exertion, and help to prevent in the students of the school that craving to come before the public as exhibitors of works of art in other exhibitions, which draws many aside from the true purpose of their education.

Allow me to recapitulate to your lordship the objects which I have urged on your attention in this letter.

First, The independence of the masters, as to their views of the *instruction* to be given in the schools, which implies the uselessness of much of the present duty of the director.

Secondly, The establishment of lectures by the master, treating fully of the *principles* of design, &c. &c.

Thirdly, The better remuneration of masters, with a view to increased efficiency, and to their being enabled to visit the manufacturing districts at home and abroad, to study their wants in ornamental art.

And fourthly, The establishment of an open biennial exhibition, with prizes for original designs, &c.

My chief apology for this intrusion on your lordship must be, that I feel strongly impressed that the present arrangement of the Schools of Design is defective and injudicious, and that prompt measures should be taken to improve their condition.

RICHARD REDGRAVE, A.R.A.

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY.

On the 23rd ult. Mr. T. H. Scaly, of Bristol, delivered, to the members of the Athenæum in that city, the first of a course of two lectures upon the history of Gothic architecture.

The lecturer commenced by stating that the president of the Athenæum had requested him to deliver a lecture on an architectural subject of great local interest — St. Mary Redcliffe Church; and, as the restoration of that edifice was a matter in which he took a deep interest; and one towards which he would not willingly lose an opportunity of directing the public attention, he had readily consented to do so: and he had thought it well to preface his notice of that splendid building by some general account of the rise and progress of Gothic architecture, with a description of the chief phases it had presented in this country. He should principally confine himself upon that occasion to the latter part of the subject, and on Wednesday evening Redcliffe Church would supply him with material to illustrate much of what he should have to set before them. In tracing the genealogy, so to speak, of Gothic architecture, they were led back to the temples of Luxor and Thebes. The airy filagree of the Gothic-groined roof, supported on thin walls and slight columns, the tower with its light and rich array of buttresses, niches, pinnacles, and battlements, grouped and clustered together—and the graceful and delicate spire, soaring into the air to such a dizzy height, might all be traced back to the enormous walls, unwieldy columns, and ponderous roofs of the Egyptian temple. Though the one may seem to be produced by the easy work of fairy finger, and the other to be raised by the stupendous labours of a Titan race, still it was not difficult to follow the gradations by which the change had been wrought, and to observe the progress of an organic principle which, manifesting its faintest trace in the rock-hewn caverns of Nubia, seemed to exhibit an almost vegetative vitality in the branching stone-work of a Christian cathedral. An ingenious writer, Thomas Hope, had endeavoured to break the connection, by referring Grecian and Egyptian architecture to independent sources. He asserted that the Egyptian buildings were imitated from the rock-temples of Nubia and Abyssinia, and those of Greece from the log buildings of the Scythians, who settled in the woody districts of Greece. But, although in the Greek Doric temples there were evidences of an imitation of wooden structures, still the principles of the composition were precisely those of the prior works of the Egyptians, and belonged not less naturally to construction with stone than with timber—nay, in many respects more so. Besides, on the borders of the Nile they found columns and mouldings closely resembling the Grecian Doric; and, as these stood in connection with buildings known to be more ancient than the earliest Doric temples of Greece, it was certainly more probable that the Greeks derived their architectural notions direct from Egypt, and only introduced such modifications into the practice of their art as were suggested by the application of new materials, or derived from their finer sense of proportion and grace of form, than that two styles, originating from perfectly distinct types and perfectly distinct necessities of construction, should have exhibited the coincidences, both in arrangement and details, which were found between the columnar buildings of ancient Egypt and the temples and villas of the Greeks. Greek architecture, then, arose out of Egyptian, and, in a more distinct and unquestionable manner, Roman arose out of Greek. But, though those formed distinct and defined styles and substyles, one general principle of composition was evident through all. The leading lines in all were horizontal; the principal buildings low in proportion to the extent of ground plan; the perpendicular lines were short and interrupted, and the columns and pilasters, which formed the principal upright lines, did not extend to nearly the whole height of the buildings; but the horizontal lines of the architrave, frieze, and cornice were continued generally unbroken along the whole extent of the façades to which they were applied. The invention of the arch, however, led by degrees to an alteration of the horizontal system, and eventually to the introduction of a totally new principle of architectural composition: not necessarily, indeed, for the Italian, in which the semicircular arch is so freely used, and the Saracenic, in which the pointed and horse-shoe arches prevail, whilst the horizontal principle was somewhat obscured in them, yet seldom exhibited any thing of its opposite.

A great many theories had been proposed in relation to the origin of Gothic architecture, but most of them had been directed to the origin of the Gothic arch, as though that and Gothic architecture were one and the same thing. The Gothic arch existed before the development of the Gothic system of architecture—it existed in the Saracenic and in the Hindoo systems, which exhibited the struggle between wild fancy and arbitrary rules, and differed as widely in their principles of composition from the so-called Gothic of Christian nations, as they did from the architecture of Greece and Egypt. Two favourite notions as to the origin of Gothic architecture were—the first, that it arose from the accidental formation of Gothic arches by interlacing semicircular arches one with another; the other, that it was an imitation in masonry of an avenue of trees. The former would lead them about as far towards the development of Gothic architecture as the invention of letters would towards the formation of an epic poem. Nay, it was perhaps even a mistake to say that the pointed *arch* was so discovered, as at least in the earlier examples of interlacing arches the principle of the pointed arch was not exhibited. The mere form was shewn, but not the arrangement of the stones necessary to give that stability which belonged to the true arch. The second notion might be fanciful and poetical, but it was totally overthrown by what could be proved of the gradual development of Gothic art, which was not the mere invention of one man, but the product of the collective genius and necessities of a race of men. No system of architecture was ever the invention of the individual man, but was rather a work of nature, in which she used mankind as her instruments. The formation of a style of architecture was in almost all cases the work of ages. Grecian architecture, indeed, appeared, like other arts in Greece, to have risen almost suddenly to something like perfection in the age of Pericles; but it was not the less a result of the activity of many minds. One man might have invented the Doric, another the Corinthian capital; but those were deviations in the practice, and involved no change in the principle of the art. Doric, Ionic, Corinthian — the same principle was observable through all. They all evidently belonged to one age, one people. Abundant proof existed in the architectural works of the middle ages to shew that Gothic architecture grew out of classical architecture, by a very gradual process. The first step towards so great a change was the introduction of the arch, which was at first applied to window openings, then to roofings over narrow passages and small apartments, and eventually to covering in large spaces, as in the case of the Pantheon and the basilicas. At first the round-headed openings were the exception, afterwards they became the rule. At first they were used chiefly as ornamental features in the art, eventually they became the most important elements in its constructive system.

In the dark ages which immediately followed the downfall of the Roman empire, architecture, in common with other liberal arts, fell into almost total desuetude. A few Christian temples were reared amid the decaying cities of the empire out of the materials which they supplied, and old columns of various lengths and thicknesses, and of different architectural styles, were ranged together to support a roof within the walls of some Pagan temple. Whatever was known of the art lay then with the monks; and it was remarkable that even at a period when the ornamental arts had almost ceased to be, and civilisation seemed fast waning from the world, constructive skill, involving a large amount of mathematical science, appeared yet to make advances. The huge dome of St. Sophia, at Constantinople, then the seat of art, was erected in the sixth century, and many smaller domes, as well as large vaults, were constructed in various parts, particularly in Lombardy. The Byzantine architecture of this period could scarcely be said to constitute a style, so much was it made up of heterogeneous materials and conflicting principles.

It was natural that where innumerable decaying palaces and temples afforded abundance of material to the builder, ready wrought to smooth surfaces and ornamental forms, that such should be appropriated and put together without regard to any rules of combination to which they were originally subject. Probably the irregularities in the Byzantine and Lombard buildings formed the primary reason why, in the succeeding styles which grew out of them, and which were classed together under the general term Gothic, a perfect regularity of design seemed never to have been aimed at. With the eleventh century commenced a new era in architecture. Something of a more determinate style, one more subject to rule and system, began then to be developed. The Duomo of Pisa, founded in 1015, exhibited more of design and a higher feeling of art than any of the buildings in the Byzantine and Romanesque styles which had preceded it; and a religious fervour, combined with a widely-spreading sense of the beautiful in art, awakened an active spirit for the erection and embellishment of churches and other ecclesiastical buildings. The example set at Pisa was speedily followed in most of the cities of Tuscany, Lombardy, and Romagna; and cathedrals, baptistries, and campanili were erected in imitation of each other. Almost simultaneously, buildings in similar, though not in identically the same styles, arose in Germany, France, the Netherlands, and England. We call them usually Norman in the latter, Romanesque in the former. One principal point in which the latter differed from the Italian, was in their giving less importance to the horizontal lines of the design and more to the perpendicular; in the sharper rise of the roofs, and, consequently, in their gables or pedimental ends. They made, too, a further advance in the upward tendency, from the low temples of Greece to the lofty vaulting and spires of the Gothic cathedral.

After dwelling at some length upon the reasons why Gothic architecture in Italy did not grow up to a perfect system, he continued: They found that in the Romanesque of Italy the horizontal principle prevailed. Small arcades, very similar to those which prevailed in the Norman buildings of England, rose tier over tier on the façades and sides of their buildings, just as they did in some of the old Rhenish churches, and in parts of Norwich Cathedral and Tewkesbury Abbey; but the former were separated into tiers by horizontal cornices, the latter into upright compartments by perpendicular strings and buttresses. It was not until the upward principle was carried, by the introduction of the pointed arch, to its full development, that the incompatibility of the two systems was felt. The Gothic arch was probably introduced into Italy from Ger-

To learn more about OCR and PDF Compression visit ThePaperlessOffice.org